

Ever since I graduated from SAS, I have slowly come to realize that the real world can be quite a scary place. I often find myself reminiscing about somewhat simpler times in high school.

I had some of the most memorable times of my life at SAS, and I was fortunate enough to have been able to share these great experiences with an extraordinary group of wonderful classmates and teachers. It is no understatement to say that of these experiences, the IB Diploma Program was one of the most important; it was undeniably an integral part of my high school life. The IB Diploma Program was invaluable in broadening my knowledge and honing my skills in preparation for university. This definitely did not seem so at the time however, what with the many sleepless nights, countless hours of studying, and interminable complaining. The procrastination didn't help either.

One of my most favourite memories from my time in the IB Diploma Program was my IB Math HL Year 1 class, taught by Mr. Chao. Including me, the class had only five students. Due to the classes that we had selected, the five of us had been placed in one time slot, with the rest of the IB Math HL Year 1 students (much more than five) in the other time slot. Despite the small size of our class, we were neither disadvantaged nor hindered. I think that the tight-knit structure of the class resulted in not only a strong and effective environment for learning, but also a special atmosphere and bond between the five of us and Mr. Chao. On one occasion, I remember my classmate and good friend remarking that he enjoyed how Mr. Chao's whiteboards were always so spotless and carefully cleaned in comparison to other whiteboards, evoking Mr. Chao's trademark "Oh dear.....". In this manner, I felt we grew quite comfortable with each other, and all of us offered our share of similar non-sequiturs and random questions. It was also during this time that we discovered Mr. Chao's extensive vocabulary. In my IB Math HL Year 2 class a year later, the same friend scoured the dictionary one day in an attempt to stump Mr. Chao with the most obscure word he could find. I can't for the life of me remember what that word was, but needless to say, Mr. Chao knew it. As a class, we were keen to help each other, collaborate (legitimately, of course), and discuss questions about the material. I always felt especially proud when our smaller class scored better than the bigger class on tests. Out of all my IB Diploma classes, I always looked forward to that afternoon Math class the most.

Thank you, Mr. Chao, for building and nurturing my interest in Mathematics. I don't know if you remember, but I did horribly on that first test in Grade 10 Algebra II/Trigonometry. I was disheartened and unsure of whether I could keep up in the class. However, your endless patience and readiness to answer any of my questions, alongside your ability to make even the most difficult concepts understandable helped me to gain confidence, and strengthened my resolve to do better. I have always appreciated your constant efforts to clearly and carefully formulate visual, written, and verbal explanations of concepts so that students can understand them with greater ease. Now, in university, I find that the courses I find most engaging in my Engineering program are the Mathematics courses. In fact, I am planning to do an option/minor in Mathematics alongside my Engineering degree.

Mr. Chao, I think I speak for all of the SAS Pudong IB Diploma students when I say that we couldn't have asked for a better IB Coordinator. You were always organized and prepared with updates and announcements, not to mention open and inviting to any inquiries we had (and boy, I can imagine we had quite a few). Being the first group of IB Diploma students at SAS Pudong, we were in unfamiliar territory, and I am sure that all of us, at one point or another, felt stressed, unsure of ourselves, and intimidated by the new challenges presented to us. However, it was always a comforting relief to know that you were the

one guiding us with your knowledge and optimism as the IB Coordinator. Your well-learned views on teaching and learning always inspired us to do better, and made coming to school a pleasure. Thank you, Mr. Chao, for supporting us all the way, and helping SAS Pudong's IB Diploma Candidates become IB Diploma Graduates! We couldn't have done it without you!

Kai-Jher Tan, Graduating Class of 2008